

# Tainted Soul

Von abgemeldet

## Kapitel 4: The Sacrifice Of One Love For Another

A few months passed from that day when Runeblade was given to me. It gave me quite a boost in strength when I fought but still, even with the Sword of Hope at my side, I had not the skills to defeat Kaizer and Solaris. When I thought things could not get any worse for the light, I got word that Jade, the wife of Solaris had given birth to a son. Immediately, I knew that this would pose quite a problem should he inherit strength like his father, yet the powers of Hell would not let me near the infant, nor would I allow myself to strike down a defenseless child. As the days past, I witnessed this boy grow at an unnatural rate to manhood. It was my hope that he would adopt a nature more like his mother, but again, I was let down as Isoden, the son of Solaris began to torment the people of Hollow. He seemed to be fond of controlling the minds of others to do his bidding and the will of Evil. One such person was a young woman by the name of Venus. Taking over her mind, he began to bend her will to do his bidding. When I heard of this, I took up Runeblade and went to find the child of Evil. It did not take very long to find him as he was enjoying himself at Venus expense. I attacked him immediately as Runeblade rang throughout the area. We fought for quite a long time, neither of us gaining a definitive advantage over the other when without warning, Venus threw herself at me. No doubt that Isoden had decided to use her against me. She grasped my head with both hands as my body froze. I was not all too sure what happened when she let go, but Isoden had fled the area. I shook the hazy feeling from my head as Venus strolled away as if satisfied with something. When I had recovered, I hastened after them.

Isoden enjoying himself at the tavern, I drew Runeblade and began to walk towards him, when suddenly, I froze. I willed myself to move, trying with all my might, but I did not move a single step. I felt a hand trail along my sword arm as Venus stepped into view. She smirked at me as she turned to Isoden, asking him if she might keep me for herself. I let out a growl as Isoden laughed and granted her the power to control my actions. I suddenly found myself following her as if my legs had a mind of their own. We walked around the land as she delighted in ordering me around. Dispatching a hydra, mining for gold to buy her jewelry, I silently swore to destroy Isoden if I ever broke free from Venus's hold on me. The next day, Venus was sitting at a table in Kelay tavern, I on the other hand was being forced to clean the table and fetch her drinks from the barkeep when Xaka walked in. She had heard of what happened to me and threatened Venus if she did not set me free. Venus smiled at her as I drew Runeblade. "No..." I said to her as she willed me forward. Xaka merely stood in place, a look of sorrow on her face as I stood before her, fighting this influence with all I

could as Runeblade rose above my head, carried by my own hand. I shouted to Venus, pleading with her to stop, but my words fell on deaf ears as my sword arm came down, bearing Runeblade upon Xaka as she fell to the ground, blood flowing from the open gash in her armor as I looked at her in frozen horror.

Amidst my frustration and anger, Venus left the tavern, beckoning me to follow. I tried to say something to Xaka, but no words came from my throat. I felt sick to my stomach. I couldn't believe that I did not have the strength to fight against it. Again... it happened again. Thoughts of when Kaizer had my soul crashed down upon me as I thought again... I had failed Xaka. And it killed me inside. The memory still does more damage to me than any sword. Remembering Xaka laying there...

Venus led me to the pits of Hell where she entered the chamber of Solaris. Fortunately for me, Solaris was not there at the time, but I almost wish he had been. The enchanted shackles and chains of the chamber gripped my arms and legs, pulling and binding me to the wall as Venus drew her dagger. I merely fell to my knees, the sight of Xaka still burning in my mind, even as Venus cut a deep gash in my hand, letting the blood flow into a large bowl. Venus then began to confess her apparent love for me as she cut a similar gash in her own hand, letting our blood mix together in the bowl. She told me that even if she could not have me as a whole, we would be forever linked. I did not understand what she meant until I heard her chanting an ancient spell. A dark mist began to run along the bowl, it swirled along the surface of the blood inside and began to take form, the blood began to ripple as it dripped upwards into the darkened mass. When the blood had emptied from the bowl completely, the form floated up to rest in Venus's arms as she looked down upon it with a smile. My head still faced the ground as the shackles released me. I just sat there on my knees until I heard a loud cry come from in front of me. Slowly, I raised my head to see Venus holding a small child in her arms. " Say hello Tiernan. " She said softly. " Say hello to Eeden... your son... our son. "

My heart sank. Not even Kaizer himself could ever have crushed me in such a way as this. I prayed with all I was that this was some nightmare, and that I would wake up soon even though I knew this was no dream. Venus left Solaris's chamber with the child as I remained how I was for the longest time. It felt as if everything in my life, all I had, and all I was had been completely obliterated in a single moment. I thought only of Xaka and how she would react. I never felt fear such as this. Its grip seized my heart, sending a feeling of pure dread through me. I would have rather faced the entire forces of Hell alone than to see the look on Xakas face when she got word of what Venus had done.

When I finally willed myself to move, I left Hell and made my way back to the tavern. Venus seemed to have released me when she took what she wanted. I stood at the gates of Hell and drew my blade. " Isoden... " I said angrily as I took flight towards the tavern. Bursting through the tavern door, sending it from its hinges I immediately called Isoden outside as he grinned and followed. The instant he was out the doorway, I attacked, releasing all my anger upon him. It took some time, but I finally was able to defeat him, leaving his broken and unconscious body in a small crater outside the tavern. I sheathed Runeblade as I walked back inside the tavern. Not noticing anyone in the establishment, I took a seat at an empty table and began to merely stare out

the window. As I was distracted within my own thoughts, Venus came behind me and placed Eeden in my lap. Without a word, she left me there with this child. The hold Isoden had on her had broken when I defeated him. I looked down at Eeden with a heavy heart. What was I to do? I had no skills with a newborn child. Eeden looked up at me and fluttered his black wings as he began to cry. I sat there, unsure of what to do when Roelstra came over to the table and told me that I was holding him wrong. She had a son of her own so any help from her was welcome. She began to teach me the things she knew about newborn children and slowly, I began to feel more comfortable around my son. Gabriel, Roelstras young boy enjoyed playing with Eeden whenever he saw us, and as I watched my son playing happily, I began to feel something. He was my son after all, whether I liked it or not, I was stuck with him. But as time passed that day, I began to feel closer to him. I didn't go home that night. I was still too afraid to tell Xaka. I took Eeden to the forest where I found an adequate tree to lie in. With my son resting in my arms, I fell into a deep sleep.

I awoke the next morning to find Eeden flying above me. He was pulling leaves from the tree and letting them fall to the ground as if he were playing with the great oak. I flew up behind him and took him in my arms as he laughed playfully at me and banged on my armor, enjoying the clanging sound. With a long sigh, I decided it was time to tell Xaka of what happened. We arrived at the house after a short flight through the forest. As I opened the door, I found Xaka sitting in front of the fireplace. As I was about to speak to her, Eeden broke free from me and flew over to her, plopping himself right in her lap. She looked at him oddly before turning her gaze to me. I took a deep breath and walked over to her. I took Eeden back into my arms and sat in my chair across from her. She asked me who the baby was and with three words, all was silent. " He's my son... "

Xaka didn't say anything. Not a single word. Roelstra had already told her what happened, but she apparently wanted to hear it from me. She got up from her chair and left the house without even looking at me... It was one of the most painful moments of my life. Venus came to the house later that day and took Eeden with her as I went in search of Xaka, praying to any Spirit or God that would listen that there was a way to rectify this. Finding her later that day, I tried to speak to her, tried to tell her that I did not want this, and that I wished Eeden had never been created. All Xaka said was that it was one of her hopes that we would have had a child together, and that now, everything seemed ruined by this. I couldn't help but agree, but then I was the one stuck with him, not Xaka. I couldn't simply turn my back on the fact that I now had a son to care for. And I did care for him. Slowly, Xaka and I began to drift apart. Barely speaking more than a greeting to each other at the time. I was completely torn. Xaka... My soulmate. The woman I loved more than life itself. And Eeden... my son. The child I may not have wanted, but loved all the same. He was of my blood, though his creation was unnatural. Venus slowly began to become rather unstable in her mind as she threatened many times to kill herself so I would come to the rescue. I had no idea what to do. Venus had her husband and daughter to look after, yet seemed to want to be with Eeden and me more. I tried in vain to make her realize that it was not meant to be, but she would have no part of it. On another end, I thought that I needed Eeden to have a mother on my side at least, so I discussed the matter with Xaka. Though painful as it was for her to fathom taking care of my son that was not hers as well, she agreed to be Eedens stepmother. When Venus heard of this, she took him from me

and ran, threatening to kill both herself and our child. This only worsened things between Xaka and me. I remember Xaka saying once that perhaps I would be better off with Venus and be with that family. No... I could never do that. My heart belonged to her. I couldn't fathom being with anyone else. These things were mixed up so much that I had no idea of what to do, or what was the right thing to do. Finally, I decided that it must end. All of it. I had a choice to make... and may I be forgiven for choosing between the two people I loved.

The next time Eeden was left in my care, I gave each moments attention to him. We played together for the entire day eventually tiring him. He fell asleep in my lap as I watched him for nearly the entire night. I thought only of what I should do. I felt as if I was being ripped in half. I couldn't bear it. Not this. I ran my fingers across the top of Eedens head as I began to whisper an eternal sleeping spell. The magical energies flowed into my son as my tears fell upon him. Taking him into my arms as he slept, I flew to the highest clouds in the sky. Barely able to speak, I somehow managed to chant one last spell, making one of the smaller clouds tangible. Resting Eeden upon that very cloud, I tried to say how sorry I was, but I couldn't speak. I could only watch in the most horrible sadness as Eeden, my own son floated away upon that cloud, never to be seen again.